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only, Ps. 73:12 and Eccl. 3:11. In the former place, instead of "the ungodly who prosper in the world," we should read "being always at ease they increase in riches." In the latter instance, "He hath made everything beautiful in its time; also he hath set 'ôlām in the heart of man," notwithstanding the disposition of Gesenius and other Hebraists to give it the meaning "world," *saeculum*, which it acquired in the later Hebrew, we are not justified in departing from the ordinary meaning of the word. There is not an instance in Scripture where 'ôlām may fairly be interpreted "world." Such instances as Ps. 145:13; 106:4, which have been adduced, yield a far better sense when 'ôlām is translated by a time-word. In the passage before us the preacher would say, that God has indeed made the course of nature and of human life attractive with beauty and delight; still he has put eternity in man's heart, and therefore man cannot find permanent contentment and satisfaction in the finite world. Anything less than the infinite and eternal, for which his spirit yearns irrepressibly, becomes in the end hateful, a vanity and vexation of spirit, 2:12 seq. He may not be able to understand the work that God doeth from the beginning to the end, nevertheless he turns wearily from the perishable works of his own hands in which there is no good, to the imperishable works of God. In the contemplation of these and in doing good man finds the joy of life, v. 12.

THE SONG OF DEBORAH—JUDGES V.

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I. AN INTERPRETATION OF THE SONG.

Verse 1. Deborah begins her song with an exhortation to praise Jehovah, that he has stirred the mighty in Israel to exert their might; that he has given the people heart to seek the foe.

Vs. 3-5. She would have the neighboring kings and princes listen while she extols Jehovah, the God whom Israel serves. At once addressing Jehovah, and referring to the time when he adopted Israel as his people, she makes mention of the commotions in nature attending that transaction. Thus she indicates that Israel's God has power to defend the people of his choice; and might be expected to interpose in their time of need—as these kings and princes have just seen him do—and make his people always triumph.

Vs. 6-8. True it is, she says, that in spite of what Shamgar and Jael might do, the highways and villages of Israel were long deserted; and so continued until I, Deborah, arose, and my mother-like counsels prevailed.

But this abject condition of Israel, she says, was due to their forsaking Jehovah, their God; who therefore punished them with war and lack of courage to defend themselves with shield and spear.

Vs. 9-12. But a better day has come, and with heart turned to those who have brought it to pass—grateful both to those who gave command, and to their volunteer army—Deborah again summons to Jehovah's praise. All classes should

join in it,—the dignified, who ride on white asses; the wealthy, who recline on rich divans; the commonalty, who, engaging in business pursuits, are oftenest found upon the road—all should wisely consider what Jehovah has wrought; the archers should rehearse it, as, returned from the conflict, they rest at the quiet fountain by the city gate—should rehearse the gracious deeds of Jehovah, whereby his people have been restored to their deserted homes. Deborah stirs up herself to celebrate the victory in her song; and bids Barak display his captives, and so proclaim the greatness of the triumph.

Vs. 13-18. And now Deborah goes on to sketch in lively manner who were ready for the encounter, and who declined to come to it. No great number composed the achieving army, but, as it were, a remnant of the nation; yet its true noblemen—heroes with whom Jehovah is present, as Deborah joyfully perceives!

From Ephraim there come such as had dislodged Amalek and established themselves in his possessions. With Ephraim Benjamin fitly combines, having also descended from Rachel, being his neighbor, and not numerous. From Machir—so the half tribe of Manasseh, west of the Jordan, is poetically designated, Machir being Manasseh's only son—from Machir come able* commanders—whose following we are left to infer. From Zebulon they come in long procession, directed by their leader's lance. The princes of Issachar respond to the call of Deborah, and the tribe in general shares the spirit of Barak—their very feet seem moved by it, and speed them to the battle-field. Reuben at first warmly resolves to aid his brethren; but loth to leave his verdant pastures and choice flocks, his resolves turn to questionings that detain him in his well-watered land, Gilead—that is, *all* beyond Jordan—keeps aloof from the war. Dan prefers his commerce to national interests; Asher in his seaside home, remote from the strife, gives it little regard. But Zebulon and Naphtali, hardy mountaineers, are ready to sacrifice their lives for their country's good!

Vs. 19-23. This small but choice army, at Taanach, and by the waters of Megiddo, meets King Jabin's hosts, strengthened by the other kings of Canaan, and commanded by Sisera. The enemy had come for spoil, but—wholly failed to win it! The heavens blinded them with impetuous hail and rain,† and thus the stars might seem to have left their courses to discomfit Sisera. Many of his warriors the swollen Kishon swept away. How vain becomes the strength of this great multitude! And now there is a great stamping of horses; for their chariot-riders, put to flight, dash along with hunter's speed! Meroz neglects to intercept the fugitives, and thereby brings heavy curse upon her inhabitants.

Vs. 24-27. On the contrary, rich blessing is invoked on Jael's fearless zeal for the cause of Jehovah and his people—(real it may be, not according to the knowledge of these later times).

Vs. 28-30. Sisera the mighty is despoiled of his might—is dead! But his mother, with longing, still looks for his return, yet with great forebodings! The wise ones of the princesses of Sisera's harem would explain his delay by the great amount of booty to be gathered up. (How their wisdom fails to reach the truth of the case!)

V. 31. Deborah asks—and in a sort predicts it—that like destruction may come to all of Jehovah's enemies; but, for his friends, she desires that, like the sun, with a hero's strength they may enter upon and accomplish their day!

*The same root word here as in verse 9.

† Cf. Josephus *in loc.*

II. A FREE RENDERING OF THE SONG.

That the strong in Israel, laid bare their strength ;*
 That the people came to battle willingly ;
 Bless ye Jehovah's name !

Hear, O ye kings of earth ! ye princes lend your ear !
 I of Jehovah, I would sing ; would touch the harp,
 In honor of Jehovah, God of Israel !

Jehovah, when thou wentest out from Seir ;
 When thou didst march from Edom's field,
 Earth quaked ; yea, heaven dissolved ;
 Yea, clouds dissolved in rain !
 Mountains flowed down, at presence of Jehovah—
 Sinai there, at presence of Jehovah, God of Israel !

In days of Shamgar, Anath's son ;†
 In days of Jael, idle lay the ways ;‡
 And they who trodden paths frequent,
 Went ways circuitous.
 Idle lay the villages in Israel—idle !
 Until I, Deborah, arose—arose,
 And like a mother wrought for Israel.

He chose new gods !
 Then war'was at his gates.
 Did shield appear—or lance,
 'Mong Israel's forty thousand men !

My heart goes out to them who were the law of Israel ;
 To such as of the people came to battle willingly !
 Bless ye Jehovah's name !

Who on white asses ride ;
 Who on rich carpets sit ;
 And ye who tread the way, in toil for bread—
 Muse on the victory !

* "For that leaders, etc.," of the Revision, is intelligible and well. The original seems also to tell us that these leaders have long hair, unconfined; that they are Samsons, giving play to the strength residing in their locks. The original of v. 9, with poetic word, designates these leaders as *governors, law-givers, judges*; and perhaps would say that these leaders were *judicious* as well as strong, and so fitted to give the word of command.

† Shamgar's superhuman deed, recorded in ch. 3:31, brought no permanent deliverance; nor could Jael's daring spirit have done so, while Israel delighted in idols.

‡ "The highways were unoccupied," that is, *unused, ceased to be traveled*. It would hardly be said here that *rulers ceased to be*, or ceased to exert themselves, when Shamgar has just been mentioned, and his deed alluded to. But the villages *were* unoccupied, had *ceased to be inhabited*, as we see from v. 11, which speaks of their *reoccupation*. So one may be inclined to hold to villages, which is not without authority—and then can translate the verb *Chad'lu* uniformly in vs. 6 and 7, and render *perazon*, in vs. 7 and 11, by the same word.

By voice of archers, 'mid the water troughs—
There be rehearsed Jehovah's righteous acts,
His righteous acts, done for his villages in Israel.
Then from their refuges on high,
Down to their gates again Jehovah's people came—
No foe to fear !

Awake, Deborah, awake !
Awake, awake, the triumph sing !
Arise, Barak, Abinoam's son,
And lead thy captives to captivity !

Then, as a remnant 'scaped—the nation's noblemen—
Down to the battle came ;
Jehovah, 'mid those heroes—joy to me !—
Came down to Jezreel !

From Ephraim—they with root in Amalek ;
Next thee, Benjamin, with thy hosts combined ;
From Machir, leaders, with their train come down ;
And out of Zebulon they onward march,
With captain's staff ;
And princes of Issachar with Deborah league,
And Issachar, like Barak brave,
Down to the vale his feet impel.

By streams of Reuben were determinations great !
Why tarrying still amid the fold ?
Is bleat of flocks so sweet to hear ?
By streams of Reuben were—deliberations great ;
But none the battle sought.

Gilead, beyond Jordan, settled down ;
And Dan—why sojourns he within his ships ?
Asher by the seashore sat,
And at his havens rests he quietly.

Zebulon accounts it nought to die ;
And likewise Naphtali, of mountain home.

Kings came ; they fought ;
The kings of Canaan fought ;
At Taanach, by waters of Megiddo—
No piece of silver took !

The heavens against them fought ;
The stars their courses left, to fight 'gainst Sisera !
By Kishon's brook their hosts were swept away,

That brook of ancient days—by Kishon's brook.
My soul tread down their strength !*

Then hoofs of horses smote the ground,
For on and on the mighty fled.
Curse ye Meroz, the angel of Jehovah saith,
Curse, curse ye, her inhabitants,
Coming not to help Jehovah,
To help Jehovah 'mid the heroes in the strife.

But Jael, Kenite Heber's wife,
Let her beyond women blessed be !
Beyond women who in tents abide,
Let her blessed be !
Water he asked, she gave him milk ;
In costly bowl she offered cream.
But deep his sleep within her tent ;

Her hand out to the nail she stretched,
And her right hand—hammer of toilers took ;
She Sisera smote, she broke his head ;
And crushed and pierced his temples through.
At her feet he sank, he fell,—lay dead !
At her feet he sank, he fell ;
Where he sank, there he fell—a thing of nought !

Through the window there looks forth, and cries aloud—
Through the lattice—the mother of Sisera :
“ Why does his chariot delay to come !
Why step his steeds so slow !”

The wisest of her princesses reply—
But her own words she still repeats unto herself—
“ Surely they booty find, and share ;
A maiden, two maidens for each man ;
Booty of garments bright for Sisera ;
Booty of garments bright, with needle wrought ;
A garment bright, on both sides wrought—
Booty for me to wear !”†

So perish, O Jehovah !—*all* thine enemies !
But them who love him—
Let them like the sun go forth,
In strength of victory !

* Seeing the enemy overthrown, and as it were prostrate, Deborah in spirit *tramples* on them. V. 28. As chariot can also stand for the horses that draw it, so here *pa'amay* (steps) of the original seems to demand that *chariots* (the plural) should be used in like manner.

† By a slight change in pointing we get *my neck*, and a ready sense for this vexed passage. For the chief speaker should be the chief wife of Sisera, and might well hope for precious raiment from the spoil; which she could fasten at and let flow down from her neck, (and shoulders).